



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

It is considered useful to add an

EXPLANATION OF GROUND PLANS 1 AND 2 OF RUINS OF ROUND TOWER.

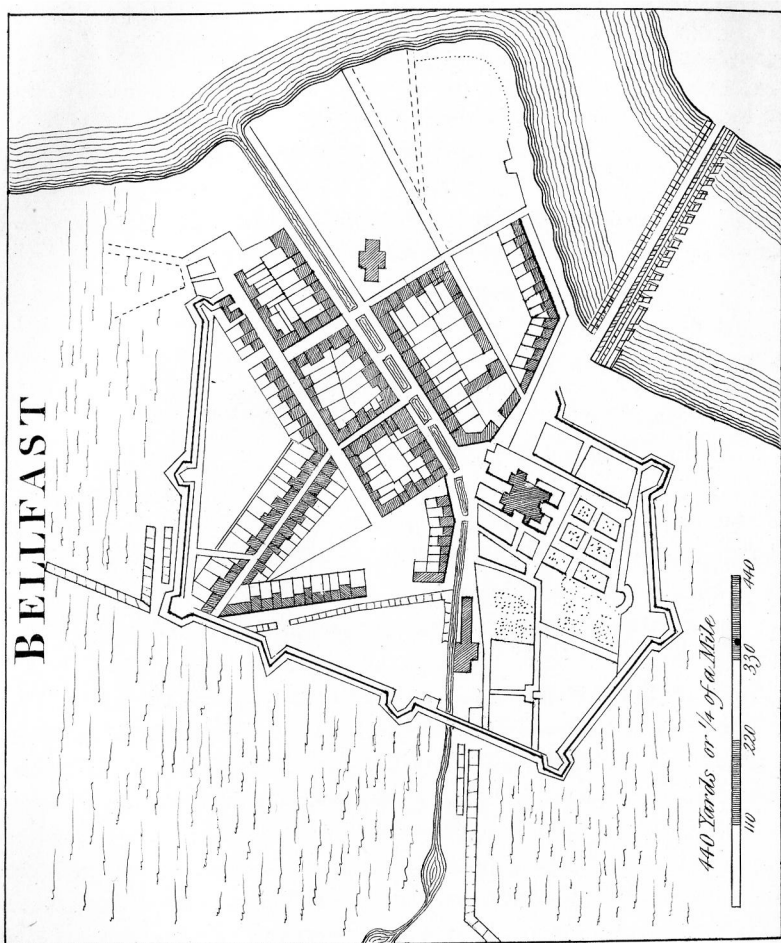
- A.—Highest part of ruins of tower; 7 feet 6 inches above remains of stone floor H and I.
 B.—Ruins on a level with seventh step; 4 feet 4 inches above remains of stone floor.
 C.—Stone stairs, consisting of seven steps averaging 7½ inches in height; 1, 2, 4, and 5, being of sand-stone; 3, 6, and 7, of field-stones; 2 and 7 are inserted into the wall, and built up with it.
 D.—Newell of sand-stone 1 foot 9 inches high and 8 inches diameter. It is not situated in the centre of the tower, being 2 feet 2 inches distant from its northern side and only 11 inches from its southern—which, with 8 inches, makes the entire internal diameter of the tower 3 feet 9 inches.
 E.—Western jamb, 5½ inches wide.
 E to F.—Western side of entrance, 3 feet 4 inches long.
 G.—Cell or crypt extending under the stairs C, and part of the large stone H. That portion of it bounded by the first step and the stone H had evidently been opened on some previous occasion, and was not covered with flags or stones when examined.
 H & I.—Two large stone blocks forming part of the floor, and on a level with the foundation stones; both extend under the entire walls and form part of their foundation.
 K.—Eastern jamb, 3 inches wide.
 K to L.—Eastern side of entrance, 3 feet four inches long.
 M M M.—Walls of tower, 2 feet thick.
 The internal length of tower and projection, from commencement of entrance, is 10 feet; diameter of chamber over G, 2 feet 6 inches; and over I, or entrance, 1 foot 9¾ inches. The building was carried up for some feet, as in the plan; the entrance and chamber appear to have been then arched over, and the cylindrical structure continued, as marked by the dotted lines, upon a portion of the arch.

THE TRUE POSITION OF THE FORD OF BELFAST.

BY EDMUND GETTY, M.R.I.A.

It was my intention not to take up the consideration of this question until a final decision had been made in the suit so long before the public, between two noble lords of the Chichester family; but as the annotator of the Hamilton MSS. has, in the July number of this periodical, given certain views respecting it, I now feel no hesitation in producing such information as I have been enabled to collect respecting a curious point of local history. I am also the less reluctant so to do as the view which, after a careful investigation, I am about to take, is one not likely to meet the case of the legal gentlemen employed on either side, and cannot, therefore, be considered as intended to influence the decision of the long vexed case of Donegall and Templemore. I may add, that although I do not set out with the object of replying to the note on the situation of the ford, given at page 246 of the present vol., it is not improbable that, in the course of this paper, I may find it necessary to object to some of the positions therein laid down, which will be done freely, but neither offensively nor controversially.

Nº I.



The Sheet is entitled, "Plans of the principal Towns, Forts and Harbours in Ireland,
For Mr. Tindal's continuation of Mr. Raphin's History."

The first time that the name Belfast, or more properly, Beal-feirste, occurs in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, is in the year of Christ 1476; but long previous to that date the same locality seems to have been known as "the Ford:" thus, in the year 667, occurs the mention of an engagement between the Ulidians and the Picts, "*bellum fersti*" the battle of the Ford—fersti^a being the genitive case of the Irish noun *fearsaid*. In the *post mortem* inquisition 1333, preserved in the Tower, which I have consulted, "*le Ford*" is the term used when the manor and castle of Belfast are described as part of the property of William de Burgo, who was assassinated on this very passage across the Lagan. It is unnecessary to repeat here the other references proving the existence of "the ford," a fact of which there can be no doubt.^b One, however, which has been omitted, is of interest, inasmuch as the ford is given as the point where the Lagan in its legal sense is considered as terminating, it is found in the following—

EXTRACT FROM THE HAMILTON GRANT, 3RD NOVEMBER, 1605. . . . "Towards and adjoining to the north and western parts of the territory aforesaid the river of Lagan, which hath its course immediately into the bay of Knockfergus, is the most noted mearing of the territory aforesaid, and runs between the lands thereof and other parcels of territories or countries called Malone, Falfeloagh, Killultagh, and McShane Oge's countrie in Killultagh, in the county aforesaid; and the said river runs between the territory aforesaid for eight miles or thereabouts, to wit—from the passage or ford of Belfast until the said river joins another river called Garricloth."

After tracing the boundary through the county of Down to the sea coast, it proceeds:—

"And from thence the shore of the sea towards the east and north is held to be the most noted mears and bounds of the territory aforesaid, unto the Rock of Carricleagh, which is situate upon the coast of the sea between the Upper Clandeboy and the Great Ards, aforesaid, and from thence the coast of the sea, aforesaid, towards the east and the banks of the bay of Knockfergus, aforesaid, towards the north, is held to be the most noted mears and bounds of the territory aforesaid, unto the passage, otherwise the Ford of Belfast, above mentioned."

A reason will afterwards be given for the extreme precision of this description: and it may be added, that in the great map preserved in the State Paper Office, called Norden's Plott of Ireland, which is one of those published, this boundary is most distinctly marked, being shown by a dotted line along the sea shore.

It is very necessary in taking a retrospective view of any question, to endeavour to ascertain the state of things existing at the period to which such inquiry applies:—this I shall endeavour to effect with respect to the ford in question, which was intended or used to connect "the Upper and Lower Clandeboye," and, by so doing, kept up, after the English invasion, the communication between the capital and the important stronghold of Carrickfergus. Thus, for example, King John must have taken it on his route to or from Karefergus; for, we find him at Holywood (*apud sanctum Boscum*) during his progress. A king making a "progress," as in the case of John, a general at the head of a body of troops, or an Earl of Ulster proceeding from Dublin to Carrickfergus, seems to have passed by Carlingford, Newry, Maghera, Down, Newton, Bangor, Holywood, or Newton—Holywood, at

^a Sic. in *Annals*.

^b *Four Masters*; *Annals of Ulster*; *Tigernach*; *Inquisition*, p. m. 7 Ed. III.; *Pipe Roll*, 46 Henry III.; pub.

State Papers, ii., p. 100; Harl. MSS.; Hollingshed; Sir Henry Sidney; McCana, in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*; *Hamilton's Vell.*; *Ulster Journal*, p. 246, &c. &c.

which latter place a point was reached on the south side of the Bay of Knockfergus, which bay effectually prevented the passage into the lower Clandeboye, unless by boat or ford; for no bridge existed by which to cross the broad river of Lagan or the arm of the sea which intervened. That a ford did exist all history agrees; and, it is not unreasonable to suppose; that, according to the state of the tide, the traveller either crossed in a straight line over the hard sand until he reached at low water the banks of the Lagan, or of the narrow part of the estuary where it was easily fordable at any part. Or, if the tidal or river water rendered this inconvenient, he most probably found a paved road descending from West Holywood, now Strandtown, of which the name itself is indicative, and continued along the strand as far as the small river called Owen O'Cork, now Con's Water. After passing a ford here, of whose existence I shall give proof, the road seems to have continued to the point where the ford of the Lagan commenced, wherever that may have been, and which it will be my object, before concluding this article, to determine.

It is to be regretted that so few ancient Irish maps are preserved which can illustrate this subject: indeed I am not aware of any which shows the ancient roads, with the exception of the very valuable collection of surveys, to illustrate the Hamilton patent, now in the possession (I believe) of Lord Dufferin and Clandeboy. These bear date 1625, and exhibit what we may conclude were the roads existing at that period. With respect to these, it may be briefly stated, that no road is shown as passing through the townland of Ballymacarrett, which is represented as almost entirely covered with wood. One road only is found leading towards the river Lagan, or Bay of Knockfergus, and it is precisely in the position described above, passing in a direct line from Strandtown to the high-water-mark, whence it is continued across the strand at the mouth of Con's Water, and terminates on the hard ground of the townland which is described as a "Salt Marish." If this were continued in a straight line it would cross the river Lagan very accurately at the north side of the stream which flows through the centre of High Street, that is, at the foot of Waring-Street.

Before dismissing this part of the subject, it is proper to state that the road which passes through Strandtown to the shore in one direction is continued in the other towards Newtownards, giving off branches in the line of Holywood, the Knock, &c., which can be traced to this day. These roads also agree with those given by Harris in his map of Down, published in 1744, which shows also the Strand road leading from Holywood to Belfast; but no road leading *along* or *to* the Lagan above the Long Bridge. If necessary, many similar proofs could be mentioned.

Several collateral proofs from more recent maps may be here adduced, of the accuracy of the views now propounded. In the first place, Williamson's map of 1810 shows a strand road from Holywood, and many old persons, inhabitants of Belfast, have stated to me they recollect at low water passing along it while driving to this well-known bathing-village. There are in the Belfast Harbour Office surveys of the harbour and bay made for Mr. Rennie and Mr. Telford, by persons

in their employment, all of which show a road continued along the strand from Strandtown to Con's Water. As these were made by order of government, they are not likely to have been influenced by any local feeling, if such could be imagined to have existed.

At present the paved road leading down to the water's edge still remains; but the road across the strand cannot be traced. I have already stated that I could adduce proofs of the existence of a ford across Con's Water, which I do by referring to the Hamilton maps, where it is distinctly shown, and also to the *Belfast News-Letter*, No. 3921, year 1775, where an incidental reference to it is found. And here it may not be out of place to remark the probability of the use of the expression "the fords," in the plural number, having originated in this succession of such works, found on the great leading passage from Upper to Lower Clandeboy.

"On Tuesday last, some gentlemen had business that called them to the county of Down; as the day was remarkably fine, they struck out of the public road at the end of the Long Bridge, and rode down the shore. When they came to Conn's Water, at the ford nearest to the new bridge, they heard the report of a gun, immediately a ball came whizzing past, so close to them that their horses all started and reined back at the hollow noise of the ball darting through the air—they were a little surprised; but, how much more were they alarmed before they got over the water, to be again saluted by a second report and another ball. Upon inquiry where these amusements were carried on, it was found to be a number of idle fellows, assembled at a shooting, and cock matches, at a house known by the sign of the Turkey Cock, upon the new road. Justice, humanity call loudly upon the spirited Justices of the Peace to put a stop to such unhuman barbarous assemblies; they are a disgrace to the human race. It is strange that man should not be content with destroying harmless useful animals, but should wantonly sport with the lives of his fellow creatures."

I have already spoken of the necessity that exists for endeavouring to restore a locality the ancient history of which is under investigation as much as possible into its original state, and there is none to which the rule more applies than to the limited district to which our inquiries relate. On the county Down side, for example, it is known that Lord Avonmore made a considerable reclamation on the north side of the road or causeway across the Strand, in connexion with the old Long Bridge, of which it formed a part, and was, in itself, an encroachment on the natural bed of the bay or river; on the south side of the same road-way is another reclamation, on which the old Glass-works stood, and other property of the representatives of the late Mr. Hugh Hyndman, a well-known Belfast merchant. Supposing all these works removed, old maps show that the shore line followed very much the curve now marked by the road from Holywood, when, instead of turning towards Belfast, it proceeds towards Lagan village. Mr. Boyd's Chemical Works and Mr. Coates's Foundry are also erections on ground formerly covered by the tide. On the Antrim side innovation has likewise been busily at work. The *Owenvarra* (Blackstaff), that formerly fell into the Lagan close to the ancient town, has been once at least diverted from its course.—What in old maps was called the "new cut," was probably the first change made; and Mr. Benn, author of the *History of the Town of Belfast*, who is always accurate when he states a fact of this kind, informs us that "this improvement"—he refers to the present bed of the Blackstaff, from the Paper Mill to the Lagan, being an artificial cu

—"was made about the beginning of the last century by Arthur, third Earl of Donegall, principally with the benevolent intention of affording employment and the means of support to the working classes of the place, afflicted at the time with a great dearth of provisions, which continued for several years."

Mr. Benn also speaks of May's Dock as being the original bed of the Blackstaff; in this also he is correct; but now it becomes necessary to observe that the dock he so familiarly refers to is also a thing that was, and that the site of the Blackstaff must now be described as the broad street leading from the Police-Office in Poultry-Square towards the Lagan, described in Mr. Agnew's map, the latest published, as Police Street, and a piece of building-ground near Canal Quay. In fact we may understand that the wide mouth of this stream opened immediately above the present Queen's Bridge, built on the site of the old Long Bridge. It must also be borne in mind that the high-water line above the bridge, a few years ago, was nearly about where Great Edward Street now runs, and that all seaward or riverward of this was reclaimed by the late Sir Edward May. The map by Phillips, preserved in the British Museum, where it was deposited by the authorities of the Ordnance Office, shows how much has been reclaimed since his time below the bridge. Indeed many persons still living recollect the high-water line somewhere about the present Corporation-Street. The North Bank of what is called "Thompson's ground," now about to be converted into floating docks, shows how far the bay has been encroached on in that quarter. It will be seen, in a succeeding part of this communication, how necessary it is to keep in mind the changes in the Blackstaff river (Owenvarra) when considering the question of the ford.

The ancient Irish had two very distinct terms answering to our expression "ford." *Ath* was a ford in a river when flowing through the interior of the country: *fersaid* when the ford occurred at the point of junction with the sea. On this latter term it may be interesting to make a few observations. Its primary meaning is "spindle," and its secondary seems to originate in the sand being spun, as it were, into a spindle-shaped wreath by the continued, or perhaps more properly, the alternate action of the river and tidal water. The name Belfast, derived from the combination of *beal* mouth, and this word *Fersaid*, literally means the mouth of the ford. This expression had long seemed to me unmeaning, and one susceptible of further explanation. I had, in consequence, several communications with Dr. O'Donovan on the subject, who was the first person that called my attention to the fact that the stream which passes through High-Street, and is now arched over, is named in several old maps in the State Paper Office, "*Farsait*," "*Farsat fluvius*,"—the river of the Ford. Now it was not an unreasonable conjecture that, if the river had acquired this name anterior to the formation of the Town, the mouth of the Fersat was a name easily understood, and analogous to several in the sister island, such as Yar-mouth, Bar-mouth, Ply-mouth, Ports-mouth, Dart-mouth, and many other important towns named from the rivers at whose embouchures they stand. A short time ago I had an opportunity of examining the maps referred to, and found the name inserted on several, but in every case in a

different hand (a running hand,) from the other lettering on the maps, but still at a comparatively distant period. It seems probable this was done in the Minister of States' Office, when some discussion respecting the locality was proceeding, for it must be recollected that such documents were not accessible to the public till long after the reign in which they were prepared; and, even yet, admission to the office is a favour only granted on the certificate of a Secretary of State. Papers are not sent to this great depository until after a sufficient time has elapsed to render them of interest as historical documents only.

A reference to other similar names, however, shows that the term "mouth of a ford," whatever its origin may be, is a common idiomatical expression in the Irish language, and by a reference to the index to the Annals of the Four Masters (O'Donovan's) 29 places will be found having *bel* prefixed to *atha*; and Dr. Reeves has furnished me with an example where *fersat* is used, being, in fact, another *Belfast*.

On the 65th sheet of the Ordnance Survey of Mayo, a townland called Belfarsad (Belfast) is found; it is in the parish of Achill, barony of Barrishocle; near it on the shore is Carrick-na-Belfarsad, where most probably the *Farsat* was. But, in the same parish in Achill Sound, there is a place called Gub-na-farsada, the word *Gub* being used for mouth, and not *Beal*. It is worthy of remark that *Gub* is of frequent use in the same locality, as the map shows, and, I may add, that the *farset* to which it is applied, in this instance, is on a deep water-course through the sand-bank, some distance from, but nearly parallel with, the hard land. Dr. O'Donovan translates *Gub* thus used—"point." This agrees best with the primary meaning—"beak."

The name of the river, there seems little doubt, was derived from the ford, and it is not, I would suggest, assuming too much to believe, that the thing giving the name was in immediate proximity to the stream. As Dr. O'Donovan is an important authority in all matters of this kind, I am induced to quote his very words:—

"The little stream which flows through your town and falls into the Lagan, near the Harbour Office, is called *Fersat fluvius* [i.e. the river of the ford], in some old maps preserved in the State Paper Office, London. It evidently helped to form the *fersat* or spindle, which was a hard sand bank, formed in the Lagan, by this *Fersat fluvius* and the *Owen Varra*, or Blackstaff (which originally emptied itself into the Lagan, near it), as also the Lagan itself, and the reflux tide. This ford or *fersat* may have shifted its position in the course of ages, but it is my opinion that bars or sand-banks of this kind keep their position for a very long period, without any shifting; and I have reason to believe that *fersats* of this kind were still rendered more firmly fixed by the ancient Irish, who inserted heavy stones into them to give them permanent fixity. In the barony of Tirawley, county Mayo, near Killala, and in the barony of Tireragh, near Ballysadare, county Sligo, there are bars, *fersats*, or sand-banks of this nature, which were of vast importance to the people, as they were enabled by them to cross tidal rivers, in certain states of the tide."

Much value being placed by the Editor of the Hamilton MSS. on a map said to be contained in Rapin's History of England, it becomes desirable to trace the history of this map, and endeavour to ascertain in what edition of that work the plan of 1660 is found which is copied into this Journal

at page 246. I have had many copies of this work in my hands at several times, and never recollect to have observed the plan in question. Since reading the note on the Hamilton MSS. I have been induced to make further search both here and by writing to London,^c Dublin, &c., but without succeeding in finding a copy containing this map. In the Library of the Belfast Society for Promoting Knowledge there is a folio copy in two vols., described as the second edition, James, John, and Paul Knapton, 1732. It does not contain any map of Belfast. In the Royal Belfast Institution is a copy in 8vo, 17 vols., London, James and John Knapton, 1731. As usual it is translated by N. Tindal, but, like the folio copy, has not the translator's supplement. It has no map of Belfast.

In one copy only have I met with any map. It is in 8vo., printed by John and Paul Knapton, published in 1744, and the two last volumes are supplemental to the original work of Rapin. In the first of these is a map of Belfast without date, and showing a bridge in the place where what is called the ford is inserted in the map accompanying the Hamilton MSS. This copy of Rapin is in the extensive library of R. J. Tennent, Esq., of Belfast, and I have had a copy traced from it for the accuracy of which I can vouch, and which is now given. I have no means of ascertaining where the original exists; but I am inclined to consider the map genuine, since it agrees with Phillips's, now in the British Museum. It is not in that great national depository, nor in Lambeth, nor at the State Paper Office; nor, I may safely say, in any of the public collections.

It is curious to endeavour to trace this modified map from hand to hand, for it affords a striking example of the danger of taking authorities on the evidence of preceding writers. Dr. Maitland has no more decided one in his "Dark Ages."

In 1812 the Rev. John Dubourdieu published his Statistical Survey of Antrim, and whoever furnished the illustrations copied the map from Tindal. The bridge is not shown as in the original; but the site is marked by three equidistant lines, and a fourth^d line close to one of the first three. He adds names of streets, and a reference by numbers, using the expression "correspond with," showing that he did so on his own authority. That the mistake may have originated here is probable, for

^c Mr. W. Pinkerton, with his accustomed politeness, has furnished the following information:—"The British Museum having been closed for the first week in September, as is usual, I could not reply to you about Rapin. Yesterday, however I carefully went over the fifteen volumes of Rapin's *Histoire d'Angleterre, par Haye*, 1724-36. I found no map of Belfast. I then went over Tindal's translation of the same work (London, 1725-31) with a similar result. I do not believe that the word Belfast is mentioned in either—at least it does not appear in the general index. I have not the last number of the *Ulster Journal* to refer to, but I thought, when I saw it, that the lines drawn on the map to represent the ford at the Gooseberry Corner were, to say the least, exceedingly suspicious. Mr. Berwick, I believe, who exhibited the map, speaks of Anne-Street being named after Queen Anne; why not the Anne, Marchioness of Donegall, that St. Anne's Church was called after? But in my young days the old people of the humbler class never spoke of

Anne-Street. They always termed it the 'Back of the Green.' This term, I believe, was exclusively applied to the part between Church-Lane and Corn-Market—was it named so from its being at the back of the castle bowling-green, or was it a back green, extending from the back of the houses in High-Street to the bank of the Blackstaff, which river, I believe, originally joined the Lagan at May's Dock. My mother knew an old lady who recollected the marquis's pleasure-boat lying somewhere near Arthur-Square. On the map referred to there is, if I recollect right, no notice taken of the Blackstaff. A knowledge of its ancient course would throw some light on the old topography of Belfast. I have heard it flowed down through what used to be Joy's Dam, and came close to the back of the castle."

^d This fourth line satisfies me that Dubourdieu altered the bridge into a bank or ford, for it represents the height of the parapet in the original; the shading, &c., being omitted.

there is one equally gross in his modern map, 1811, wherein we find a bridge across the Lagan, at the foot of Chichester-Street, where no bridge ever stood, though such an erection had been proposed.

In 1823, Mr. Geo. Benn, in his excellent work "*Historical and Statistical Account of the Town of Belfast*," has copied the same map, as I am inclined to suppose, from Dubourdieu. With his usual accuracy he puts the date of the map hesitatingly, not having found it in Rapin—for, he says, "the earliest plan from which its size can be determined *appears* to have been taken about 1660, or *perhaps some years later*." His copy shows what is called "the Ford" crossing the water by three equidistant lines. He uses numbers as references to streets, and gives the names, but does not say that the names or references are not in the original.

This gentleman seems to have been struck with the difference in the plans, for, at p. 73, he has these words:—

"This plan, which is to be found in Rapin's History of England, contains one very singular mistake, the placing of a bridge across the Lagan before the present structure was erected. With the exception of this, its bearings in every other respect are nearly correct. It is impossible to account in a satisfactory manner for such an error. There is a tradition that the ford by which the river was formerly passed commenced near the end of Waring-Street; while this bridge is placed in a direction very far distant from this, and even opposite to it. There is no positive account to warrant the belief that any former building of this kind existed here, except a tradition that the Lagan was at one time crossed by a temporary causeway of stones, which was, however, by no means worthy of the name of a bridge. It is still more remarkable, however, that in a different edition of Rapin's History, the error is repeated, and, instead of the straight line across the river, which the former draught exhibits, the bridge appears complete, the arches regular and finished. This latter plan has probably been taken near the time of the Revolution, though the superficial appearance of each is nearly similar. There is in it, however, another street or lane leading from North-Street, with the addition of several roads or cross-ways, both within and without the rampart. The river, also, which flows through High-Street, was furnished at this time with six bridges."

In 1846 Mr. James Kennedy, of Bangor, published a map of Belfast, in the corner of which he has introduced this favourite plan of 1660. He proceeds a step beyond the other improvers, for he not only prints in the name of the streets, but letters the bridge "Ford." He represents this as Mr. Benn does, by three lines. The latest edition of the so-called plan of 1660 is in vol. 3 of this Journal, at page 249.

The question, however, respecting the bridge shown in Tindal's map is set at rest by taking a few measurements—or, what is still more convincing, laying down, in red ink, on Kennedy's own map, the plan of the town given by him as it existed in 1660, when it will be seen that the ford there shown does not correspond with any place that at any time could have embraced both banks of the Lagan. The following extract also proves the correctness of the original map, which truly represents a bridge across the Blackstaff:—

FROM THE M.S. NUMBERED 630,—(one of the Carew collection at Lambeth palace):—"Ffrom thence we came to Bealfast, where we founde many masons, bricklayers, and other labore^r a worke, who had taken down the Ruynes of the decayed castle there almoste to the valte of the sellers, and had likewise layde the foundation of a bricke house 50 foote longe, w^{ch} is to be adioyned to the said castell by a stayre-raft of bricke, w^{ch} is to be 14 foote square.

"The houst to be made 20 foote wide, and 2 storys and a-halfe high; the castle to be builte two stories above the

sellers; all the Roomes thereof to be valted, and platformes to be made ther vpon; the stayre case is to be made 10 foote higher then the castle, about w^{ch} castle and house there is a stronge bawne almost finished, w^{ch} is flanked wth foure halfe 2 Bulworks, the foundation of the wall and bulwarke to the height of the watertable is made with stoans, and the rest being in all 12 foote high above the grounde, is made wth bricks; the 2 Bawne is to be compassed aboute wth a lardge and deepe ditche or moate, w^{ch} will always stand full of water.

"The Castle will defend the passage over the forde at Bealefast, between the vpper and lower Clandeboye, and likewise the bridge over the Ryver of Owynvarra, between the Malon and Bealfast. This work is in so good forwardness that it is like to be finished by the mydle of the next somer." (Folio 145, b.)

The paper from which the above extract is made is entitled "A reporte of the voluntary works done by servitors and other gent. of qualitie vpon lands geuen them by his Maitie, or purchased by themselves within the three other counties of Downe, Antryme, and Monaghan, and buyldyngs made in Enishowine by such freeholders as Sr Arthur Chichester, the newe Lo: Deputie, hath placed there."

It is dated 29th July, 1611, and is subscribed by

G. CAREW.

R. DRINGFELDE.

ARTHUR CHICHESTER,

THO. RIDGEWAY.

O'L. LAMBARTE.

The connexion between the ford and the town (and we may suppose the latter originated altogether in the former) is remarkable, and may in some measure aid our researches in this important question, for the town was evidently at first of very small extent, and no map of ancient date, that I am aware of, shows any part of it as standing beyond the Blackstaff or in Malone; indeed the buildings including the castle seem to have been confined to the townland of Ballyculcally, as spelled in the Chichester patent, a name now lost so far as not to be recognised in the books of the county-cess collectors. Now this townland lay to the north side of the Blackstaff, and it follows that any ford entering Lower Clandeboy on the south side of the Blackstaff was without the precincts of the town, and could not be considered the ford of Belfast. If I am correct we must seek for the ford somewhere below the present Long Bridge, if not on its very site.

Dr. Reeves has given any notices he had collected on the site of the ford in his admirable work, the *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor, and Dromore*.* By referring to page 247 of this volume it will be seen that, in copying this extract, the annotator of the Hamilton MSS. has inadvertently omitted a few very important words—"The remains of another ford, composed of large stones, regularly laid, which crossed the river exactly opposite the Ballast Office, were lately removed by the Ballast Corporation." [At the time Dr. Reeves wrote, this office stood at the foot of High-

* In justice to Dr. Reeves I am bound to acknowledge having led him astray respecting the map stated to be at Lambeth. My informant was the late Dr. McDonnell, who had a tracing of part of Phillips's map, preserved in the British Museum. What appears there as a ford is a bank or causeway, the remains of which I traced in May's fields. In the original it is lettered "sea banck." By permission of government I had an accurate facsimile of it made, which is now in the Belfast Town Hall:

it is entitled "The ground plan of Belfast, and the designe for erecting a citadel upon the strand. Fr. Thomas Phillips, anno 1625." At Kilkenny Castle is a copy of this map, only the houses are not shown, and the citadel and dock are somewhat different. I am indebted to the late Marquis of Ormonde for allowing a tracing of it to be made, which is now preserved amongst other similar documents in the Harbour Office.

Street, on Chichester-Quay, about the south corner of the new Custom-house now building.] It is my intention to show that the ford here referred to was in all probability the work so much inquired about. In the first place I may observe that the expression "the ford" was one in common use amongst seafaring men and pilots up to the year 1848, when Mr. Smith, the Harbour Engineer of Belfast, eradicated what remained of a dangerous impediment to the navigation at a very considerable expense of time and money, and injury to the machinery employed. Many persons collected to observe the work of dredging as it proceeded, and the piles of stones thrown out on the quay were objects of interest, from the fact of being taken up from the old ford. I have on many occasions seen the large dredge-boat, driven by a powerful engine, drawn down very deep and its action stopped by the hold which the pavement had taken on the bottom of the river, or by getting entangled by the piles of timber used in the work, and watched with interest until the force of the engine having loosened the impediment the vessel started up with a recoil, and the machinery again proceeded with its revolutions. Several portions of the oak piles were brought to me for examination; they seemed to have been broken off by the dredge, piece by piece, until finally the point of the iron bucket taking hold on the remaining stump drew it out. These piles were of very rude workmanship, which is not remarkable in a work of the kind; but it was further observable that they had been pointed by a very imperfect tool. In addition to these personal observations I may add that, at the time of a very low ebb, I saw what remained of the ford on the county Down side of the old channel perfectly uncovered a short time before its final removal. It showed as a sloping road-way on the bank. The following minutes, extracted from the books of the Harbour Corporation, seem also very important :—

BALLAST OFFICE, JUNE 10TH, 1786.—"Resolved,—That the ford opposite Chichester Quay is of great detriment to the harbour, and to shipping resorting thereto, and ought to be removed as speedily as possible."

"Resolved,—That Messrs. James Stevenson, Cunningham Greg, and Robert Bradshaw, be and are empowered to remove said ford, or as much thereof as can be effected for ten guineas."

"That the stones be sold to the best advantage, and that said sum be paid on demand."

JULY 25TH, 1786.—"Resolved,—That Captain Mackenzie be requested to superintend the removal of the Ford opposite the Quay, and that he and Mr. Montgomery be requested to have two lighters built, for the use of the Corporation, as soon as possible."

"Ordered, that Samuel McTeir do give them what money may be wanted for the above purposes."

JULY 3RD, 1787.—"Resolved,—That Mr. Lawson be directed to employ people to complete the removing of the Ford near the quay, and to superintend the same."

15TH APRIL, 1788.—"Resolved,—That every means may be used, as soon as possible, to eradicate the Ford opposite the Chichester Quay, and that the stones raised from the same be put round the Perches."^f

"Resolved,—That, Mr. Black, Captain McKenzie, and Mr. Montgomery, be requested to superintend this work, and to go down the water and fix on a proper place to raise ballast."

^f I find by reference to the Harbour accounts that the last payment under this order was £506 16s. 10d. in the year 1792, after which the expenditure ceased till 1848. I think the expense, from time to time, must have exceeded £1000 in all.

The following memorandums made in my copy of Dr. Reeves' work seem worthy of being preserved here, as recording the evidence of one of the parties employed in giving effect to the foregoing resolutions.

"Nov. 29th, 1848.—A pile of oak was drawn up to-day from the Ford opposite High-Street, where very large quantities of stones &c. have been removed.—Dec. 2nd, 1848. To-day I showed Neill Loughry, an old man, long in the employment of the Harbour Commissioners, the pile. He never drew any in his time; 55 years ago he was employed to remove the upper part of the ford; it was composed of longitudinal beams of timber, which retained the stone pavement. It was the way the people crossed, he heard, before there was a bridge: the timber &c. raised, was used by Mr. McTeir, then Ballast Master, to make gates at his farm. It was dry at low water, and he and others removed the stones with crow-bars, and under them was gravel. He afterwards wrought on it with bag and spoon; but the wood destroyed and broke so many spoons &c., they gave over. They had no dredge then. Neill Loughry died in 1850. The hearth-stone in his house was a quern he took out of the ford, and it remained till Mr. Dunbar pulled the house down a few years ago."

There is no difference of opinion on one point, namely, that on the county Down side "the Ford" commenced in some part of the townland of Ballymacarrett, and from this admission several important inferences may be deduced. A very ancient family, the Pottingers, held the property for a long series of years, and its members appear to have been alive to their territorial rights, for so far back as 1755, a century ago, when some dispute respecting boundaries existed, it is stated, on behalf of Mr. Pottinger:—

"That, in or about the year 1715, Arthur, then Earl of Donegall, one of the ancestors of the present Earl of Donegall, and from whom the present Earl derives his estate in the heredit^s granted by the sa patent with the consent of the s^d Joseph Pottinger, and in order to ascertain the bounds of the said Earl's Inheritance in the soil and Fishery of the said River Lagan, in s^d. Co. of Antrim; and, also, to ascertain the bounds of the said Joseph Pottinger's Inheritance in the soil and Fishery of the said River Lagan, and of his s^d. heredit^s. in the s^d. Co. of Down; he the said Arthur, then Earl of Donegall, caused timber trees to be cut down on his own estate, in the said county of Antrim, and poles, or stakes thereof, to be stuck down in the middle of the channel, or bed of the said River Lagan, in order to divide the soil and Fishery thereof between the said Earl and the said Joseph Pottinger; that is to say, to ascertain the bounds of the soil and Fishery that belonged to the estate of the said Earl, in the said Co. of Antrim side of the said River, and the soil and Fishery that belonged to the said Joseph Pottinger's said estate in the Co. of Down side of the said River, and your suppl. sheweth that the said poles or stakes, having, for the most part, in or about the year 1730, become decayed, or carried away by the floods, new poles or stakes were from time to time renewed, or stuck down in or near the places where the said first-mentioned poles or stakes had been stuck down or fixed as afores^d. in the said year 1715."

Mr. Pottinger must have been well aware of the situation of the ford which determined, under the Hamilton grant, the extent of the river Lagan; and, it is not unfair to conclude that, had the river terminated at the point which is stated by the Editor of the Hamilton MS., it would have been useless to contend with the Chichester family respecting the property in the Lagan, for the boundary of Ballymacarrett is not a great deal higher up than that point.

In the year 1779, Mr. Eldred Pottinger sold his estate to the Right Honorable Barry Yelverton, Chief Baron of the Exchequer, afterwards created Viscount Avonmore; and the new proprietor soon afterwards commenced to make an extensive reclamation of land with the view of forming a rival

town on the county Down side, the inducement being that "the Earl of Donegall had always refused to let what is called in Ireland an improving lease to any of his tenants, but sets his leases up to sale, and lets the premises to the highest bidder, without any regard to the interests of the old tenants."

Lord Avonmore has always been considered a sound lawyer, and, it may be concluded, understood what were then the limits of the Lagan. It is, therefore, an interesting fact, which an inspection of maps shows to be correct, that he did not carry his embankment the smallest distance below what I affirm to be the line of the ford, where (according to the patent he held under) the Lagan is described as terminating. [See extract page 301.] The introduction of the ford as a boundary in the Hamilton grant proves that it was a well known and well-defined thing, not merely a point at which the Lagan was fordable, and which might vary its position in the lapse of time. Indeed, a letter in the State Paper Office (Irish Papers No. 44, year 1605) shows how perfectly alive Lord Deputy Chichester was to the necessity of limiting as much as possible the demands of grantees, under letters issued by James I. Whether this arose from a desire to promote the interests of his royal master, or a wish to curtail the pretensions of Scotch interlopers, is little to our present purpose.

Many other proofs from the statements of old persons might be given, and even from the recollection of persons still living. For example, there is an anecdote of an eccentric pilot called "Mad Dinny McClean," who, when pursued by constables down High-Street, and, as they believed, surrounded, coolly dropped over the quay wall, and, by means of the ford, escaped into the county of Down. Mr. John Feeny, a ship-owner here, a few years ago, had a clear recollection of the ford, and described the water rippling over it at low ebbs. A person told me a few days ago, that he was an apprentice on board a ship lying near the ford, in 1798, and being desirous of seeing Ballynahinch fight, he dropped himself overboard, and, by means of the ford, crossed the river without being observed. Masters of small vessels and boats were permitted to take stones, &c., off the ford as ballast, free of charge. Vessels going to the Custom-House Quay often required to be lightened, to enable them to cross the ford; and, so late as February 1848, complaint was made of a vessel called the "Venus" receiving injury by being laid on the ford.

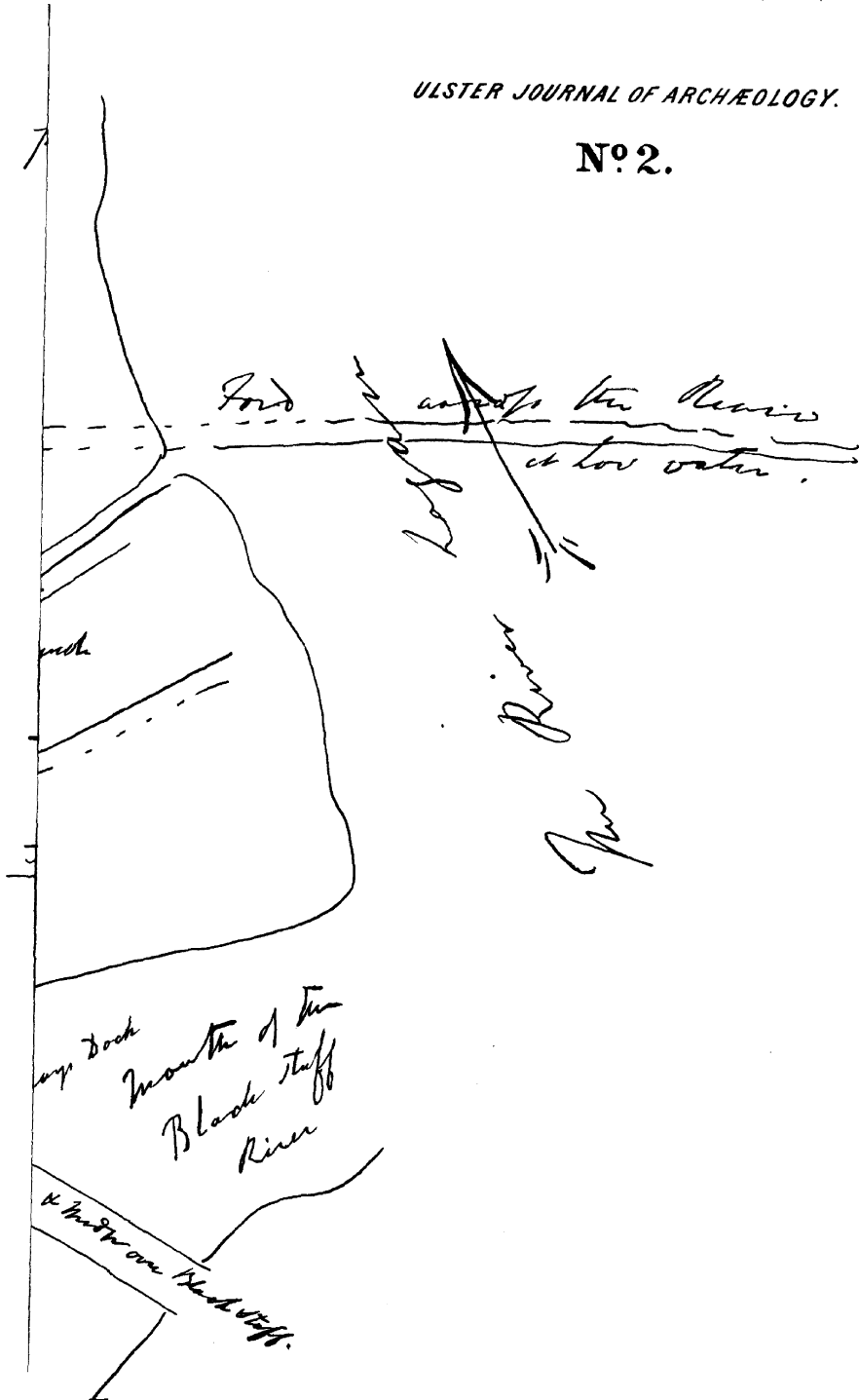
"The kinge's graunts doe dayly encrease, there is come heather one Mr. James Hamilton wth two letters from the kinge, one contayninge a geift of a 100th lande in fee farme, in the name of Tho: Irelande, the other for passinge vnto him the great Ardes or vpper Clandeboyne, wth as much of that countrie as Neale McBrian Ertoe O'Neale, or his predecessors had rents, deuties, or *cuttings* upon, by vertue of w^{ch} wordes, if he have his desires, he wyll have more lande than thre greatest lorde in that kingdome, and all is geuen in free, and comon socage, wherby his maiesties tenures are loast, and everie wher abridged, if it shall please your lo: to call for the copies of those letters you shall fende them graunts to be extraortinarie."

A few remarks still require to be made on the note in last number of this Journal, furnished by the late Mr. Berwick, who, it must be evident, produces no proofs in support of his speculations. That fords were used rather at low water than at high, is well understood, and, with respect to Belfast, mention is made in old documents of the ferry and ferry-boats. The expression *Veerhuijs*, also

in Blaeu's Charts, published in 1649, refers to the same fact. The change in the level of the slob was most probably caused by the great quantity of dredged material deposited for many years by the harbour authorities; but, so late as 1749, the following notice is found in the *Belfast News-Letter*, No. 3,282, showing that it was then a hard sand-bank :—

"Last Saturday night, as Captain Mawhinny, of the sloop "Adventure," of Belfast (arrived the day before from Rotterdam), was coming ashore from the vessel, which lay near the Belfast bank, in this harbour, he missed his way in the dark, and got so far into the mud that he could not disengage himself, but there unfortunately perished."

This observation bears on the present inquiry, inasmuch as it seems difficult to imagine the passage of horses, &c., over a soft bank, such as now exists—the deposit from the river, and from the drainage of the town, may also have contributed to this change. The assumption that the river could not have been fordable opposite the town, on account of the depth of the water at low tide, is gratuitous, and unsupported by proof; for, taking the nature of the bottom as a guide, it is evident the inclination must have been very slight indeed—perhaps only a few inches between the "Gooseberry Corner," or "Watson's Corner," and the foot of Waring-Street. It must also be remembered that when the estuary retained the natural breadth, the river, not being confined, had not the same tendency as at present to keep open a narrow *deep* channel; for, it is only a few years since deep water opposite the town was procured, by confining the stream. Mr. Berwick is somewhat contradictory of himself, however, for he argues against "THE FORD" having been on the site of the present bridge, not from the impossibility of the thing itself, but from not finding public-houses, &c., built there for the convenience of passengers. In Phillips's map (improperly spoken of as the Lambeth map, by a repetition of Dr. McDonnell's original error) the Long Bridge is shown in an incomplete state; and what is now Ann-Street is laid out leading to it, being bent from its original straight line somewhere about Church-Lane, at which point it joins what was originally called "the Back of the Green." Now as to the question of defence, which seems to have made a deep impression on Mr. Berwick: he appears to confound modern with ancient practice, by assuming that a work formed at least 1200 years ago was defended by cannon; or, if he is understood as only referring to its defence in the time of Charles the Second or James the Second, his view is equally incorrect. The Castle of Belfast is mentioned at a very early period in connexion with the ford and its defence; but it does not follow that by this expression we are to understand having cannon to bear upon the roadway. It seems rather to have been the fact that the castle, in this and similar cases, sheltered a garrison which, when need was, proceeded to the ford, and, taking advantage of the invading party crossing the water, drove them off. If Mr. Berwick had reflected for a moment he would have recollected that the demi-bastion he speaks of was a comparatively modern work, of a period long subsequent to the use of the ford, and inquiry would have satisfied him that no military engineer would have introduced such a road right into his works, which were thereby weakened. If, therefore, this question of defence by forts is worth anything, he proves the existence of his fort on the wrong side of the river; for, what military men denominate a *tête du pont* is always



placed at the end of a bridge, *beyond* the river on which the castle stands. To turn all the traffic of the country through the precincts of the castle would have been unwise and inconvenient, as well as unsafe. The Tower of London most probably guarded old London Bridge, but no one pretends to argue that we are mistaken as to its site, and that the bridge must have been at the citadel. The Hamilton maps already alluded to give a sufficient reply to the statement that the *only* road to Donaghadee, prior to the formation of the "new road," proceeded from the Gooseberry Corner, for no road whatever is shown there.

The bank or sea-wall represented in the map of 1791^s is shown in Phillips' map of 1685 as "the sea banek," which also shows what is called the "New Cutt River." The latter, there seems little doubt, was the first diversion made of the Blackstaff; and I am inclined, from a comparison of the several maps, to believe that the bridge over the Owenvarra (Blackstaff) already mentioned in the extract from a Lambeth manuscript, was in the line of the sea bank, and formed a part of it when Phillips made his survey. The testimony of Mr. Berwick's old friend of seventy seems in favour of the idea that no ford existed at the part of the river described; for one great object of fords and bridges is to prevent such dangers and plunging of horses as are there described, and the same scene might easily be got up on any river crossed by a ford by a party endeavouring to cross at an improper point. The attempt by the learned author of the note on the ford, to identify Hand's School-house with the one endowed by Sir James Hamilton's will, proves too much. The ford might be evidence that an old school found near it was Sir James Hamilton's foundation; but it is rather straining evidence to make a traditionary building of this kind, of which there were probably many on the estate, indicate the site of the ford. By a parity of reasoning we might locate the ford on Castlereagh Hill.

The illustrations which accompany this paper require some explanation. No. 1 is a fac-simile of the only map that can be considered as published in Rapin's History. It is without date, and, correctly speaking, is an illustration of Tindal's continuation of the former work. In the British Museum a printed copy of it is preserved, evidently cut out of the book. I am inclined to suppose that the original was in the possession of some private individual. No. 2 is a fac-simile of a sketch of a map, the history of which is rather interesting.

When General Bainbrige commanded this district a few years ago, he informed me that he had in his possession a map of Belfast, given to him many years before, when in garrison with the regiment to which he belonged. This he promised to show me; but it afterwards appeared he had lent it to a party who had not returned it. The General finding I was anxious to see a map, which he informed me showed the site of the ford, very kindly gave me a rude sketch he had made from the

^s It also appears in the old map in the Water Commissioner's Office, which further shows a part of the old bed of the Blackstaff, opening into the Lagan above Queen's Bridge (then the old Long Bridge), for an overfall to the Paper-Mill Dam—(Joy's Dam).

original. This is now copied here. I did not consider myself justified in omitting the modern names, added by the General in identifying old with modern places. By a note in the hand-writing of the late Mr. Allen, engineer to the Belfast Water Commissioners, it appears he had been employed to copy this map for some person. The original is, I believe, still in existence, and I hope will be produced by whoever has it. I have met with two individuals who have given me notes respecting it; one, in particular, spoke of the ford being so accurately defined. This map was most probably taken from some private collection, perhaps from the Donegall Office.¹

The third map is a composition, but I believe perfectly correct. It is intended to illustrate the ancient state of the district, at the upper end of the bay. All the county Down side is an exact copy of the same portion of the Hamilton maps, showing the roads as they then appeared, and the ford across Con's Water. On the Antrim side the map called the map of 1660, is used as far as it goes, and the river shown in it is assumed to be the Blackstaff. An old townland survey, and various ancient maps confirming one another have been taken as giving the outline of the river and bay.

The ancient position of affairs seems to have been thus :—A road leading to Carrickfergus crossed the Lagan by a ford, at a point below where the Owenvarra and another small stream (afterwards named Fersat) fell in. A town grew up around a castle built to guard the pass, and took its name from the ford, and was completely defended on one side by the Owenvarra, from parties crossing the Lagan at a higher point—at all events until the period when a bridge was built over the former. A considerable amount of confusion seems to have been caused in recent speculations, by not distinguishing between “a fordable river”¹ and “fords in a river,” for, it is quite clear, that the Lagan was fordable at any part, from Belfast upwards, while at fixed points there were regular fords. The most important of these was the one at the town, another near where the first lock of the canal is now placed—another at or near Lambeg—one near Moira, &c.

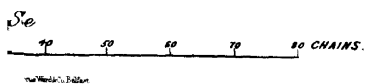
The avenue to old Mount Pottinger House can be still traced. It passed nearly parallel to the rope-walk of what was originally called the “*New New Rope-walk Company*,” and was afterwards the property of the late Mr. Ekenhead. It is now Mr. Lemon's. The new road (as it is called) is bounded on one side by ash-trees that stood on the western side of the avenue, and there is still a small gate into the road near Mr. Lemon's workers' houses, which that gentleman says was on the line of the ancient approach to the mansion-house. Mrs. Douglas, the wife of an old man who has been long familiar with the locality, recollects an old arch-way that stood at the end of the avenue :

¹Mr. Richard Allen, of Belfast, has a distinct recollection of being shown this map by his father, as a curiosity on account of its great age, and of being informed it was dated in 1660. He describes it as 18 inches square, and including some space beyond the fortifications. I am inclined to believe this to be the original of all the so-called maps of 1660, and that, in copying, only the town has been given, and the environs omitted. I have been informed that a sheet is wanting in the maps connected

with the Chichester grant, containing this part of the estate. If this report be correct, it is probable the map now mentioned had been cut out of Lord Donegall's book.

¹Mr. Ritchie, of Mount Pottinger, informs me that the bed of the Lagan near Mr. Coates's property is sandstone, and, we may assume, the river was always easily fordable, in such a situation.

ULSTER JOURNAL OF ARCHÆOLOGY,
Nº 3.



the present public road passes over its site. Now this avenue could not have led to a ford at Watson's corner; but it is in a direct line with the Ford I have endeavoured to establish.

In like manner the old narrow bridge called the "King's Bridge," near Mr. Montgomery's house at Beers' Bridge, shows the line of the original road from Castlereagh, and leads to the supposition that the chiefs of Clannaboy, when coming to Belfast from their castle on the hill, took the Ford road somewhere in the direction of the Ballymacarrett Church.

OPENING OF A CAIRN ON SCRABA MOUNTAIN (COUNTY OF DOWN), AND DISCOVERY OF DANISH COINS.

A REPORT having reached me of the discovery of a number of ancient Danish coins in opening a large cairn on Scraba Mountain, near Newtownards, I was at once struck with the importance of having the matter investigated. No instance had before occurred of such a discovery, and, if correct, it seemed likely to throw a new light on the date of these ancient structures, whose origin has hitherto been veiled in obscurity. I accordingly requested the assistance of several gentlemen interested in such matters, and endeavoured to ascertain all the particulars as exactly as possible. In company with Guy Stone, Esq., J.P., of Barnhill, near Comber, I visited the spot and conversed with persons who had been present at the opening of the cairn. Unfortunately every vestige of it had been removed before our visit; but the separate statements of the various individuals to Mr. Stone and myself agreed in almost every detail. Mr. Carruthers, of Belfast, immediately secured specimens of the coins from the jeweller to whom they had been sold, representing all the various types found; and after a minute examination of them, and a comparison with similar coins already published, drew up an account of them which will be found accompanying this article, and which is illustrated by accurate fac-similes of the coins, drawn under his own inspection.

In order to render intelligible the position of the cairn, and the remarks which follow respecting the discovery, a brief description of the locality will be necessary.

Scraba is a well-known isolated mountain, standing at the inner extremity of Strangford Lough; and, though not of great elevation, is by far the most conspicuous object in the landscape for many miles, in consequence of the low undulating character of the surrounding country. Its base, though now distant nearly half a mile from the sea at high-water, has evidently been washed by its waves at some earlier period; for everywhere in the flat tract of ground now extending between the hill and the lough recent sea-shells are continually dug up from the soil at a trifling depth. The Montgomery MSS. (written about the year 1698) mention this ground as "a large salt marish full of medicinall herts," for which the Dutch offered a considerable rent to Lord Montgomery;